

I am deeply distressed about the direction our democracy is taking in the new millenium. Democracy thrives with a free press; fascism and totalitarianism thrive with a monolithic, one-sided, censored media controlled by the same powerful groups and corporations that in effect, own the government. Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary just days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation to a free society.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.